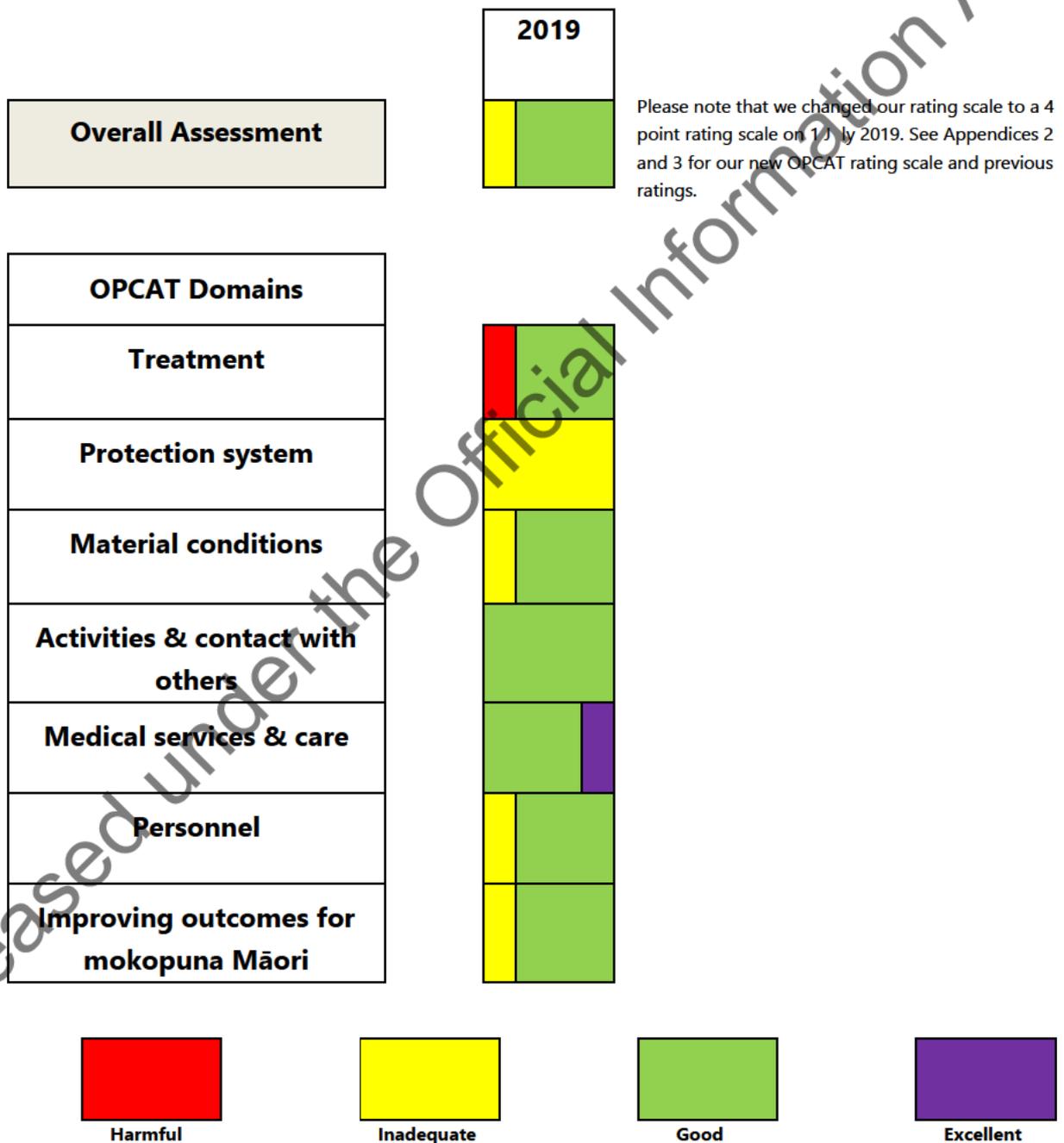


Oranga Tamariki Residence Visit (Announced OPCAT Visit)

Te Oranga Care and Protection Residence, Christchurch

Visit date: s 9(2)(a) OIA 2019

Report date: 16 December 2019



Released under the Official Information Act 1982

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Introduction

Purpose of visit

1. On s 9(2)(a) OIA 2019, s 9(2)(a) OIA and s 9(2)(a) OIA from the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) conducted an announced monitoring visit to Te Oranga, Christchurch. The purpose of the visit was to assess the quality of Te Oranga services against the seven domains relevant to our role as a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT). See Appendix 1.

Structure of this report

2. This report shares the findings from our visit to Te Oranga and makes recommendations for actions to address the issues identified. For the convenience of readers, we first list our key findings and recommendations. Here we provide the evidence for our overall domain finding as a list of strengths and areas for development. We then describe our findings for each of the seven OPCAT domains. For each OPCAT domain, we provide a statement that summarises the reasons for our rating for that domain. For more information about OPCAT, see the United Nations website.

Context

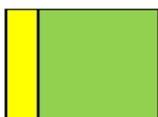
3. Te Oranga care and protection residence is a ten-bed secure residence in Shirley, Christchurch. At the time of our visit, there were ten children and young people placed in the residence. Their ages ranged from 11 to 15 years old. When we visited, s 9(2)(a) OIA of the ten children and young people at the residence were from the surrounding Christchurch area. s 9(2)(a) OIA others were from the North Island and s 9(2)(a) OIA from the Upper South region.
4. Most children and young people placed in care and protection residences have learning, behavioural, attachment and/or mental health needs that require ongoing specialist support. For some, forming relationships with people who are unfamiliar to them and engaging in semi-structured interview processes are extremely challenging. During the two days we spent at Te Oranga, we engaged with children and young people in various ways. Our first interactions were via a mihi whakatau held in the whareniui. We then moved on to a mixture of informal conversations and 'show and tell' sessions where children and young people talked us through various aspects of their life in the residence. We conducted formal interviews with six of the ten children and young people living at Te Oranga at that time.
5. While the intention to phase out care and protection residences and replace them with specialised and staffed group homes care is strongly supported by this Office, we recognise that the uncertainty associated with this changing care environment means staff may need

extra support. We are aware that the residence manager and leadership team are actively managing this uncertainty at Te Oranga.



Photo: Wharenui at Te Oranga

Key findings and recommendations



Overall Rating: Good with inadequate elements

6. Our overall rating for Te Oranga is good with inadequate elements. This is an improved rating from developing with well-placed elements, our assessment from our previous OPCAT visit in November 2018, although using a different assessment scale.
7. In assessing these ratings, we have applied our new OPCAT evaluative framework, effective from 1 July 2019. This is currently being developed in consultation with Oranga Tamariki and Barnardos. We changed our OPCAT rating system from a 5 point to 4 point rating scale. This revised scale will more clearly evaluate compliance or non-compliance with OPCAT. Please see Appendix 3 for more information on our new rating system and Appendix 4 for the previous ratings for this residence using our former rating scale.
8. While we have changed our rating scale, it is still evident that the following domains have improved since our last visit: **Activities and Contact with others, Medical Services and Care, Personnel and Improving outcomes for mokopuna Māori.**

We evaluated the Domain **Material Conditions** as at a similar level as our last visit.

We evaluated the Domain **Protection System** and **Treatment** to have regressed since our last visit.

9. Our monitoring assessment identified that Te Oranga has many strengths:

Children and young people:

- Are supported to learn about their identity and feel a sense of belonging
- Have both formal and informal opportunities to have a say in what happens
- Have good access to primary and specialist health care services
- Are able to have a say in the food they eat through a survey mechanism

Staff:

- Have created a new Behaviour Management System (BMS) in collaboration with the children and young people
- Thoughtfully plan and implement the transition plans out of residence for children and young people
- Are supported through training provided on-site to ensure they follow health plans for children and young people

- Receive training and coaching that is increasing their ability to best meet the needs of the children and young people
- Have created and piloted a new programme 'Taiohi' to better support children and young people's connectedness, access and participation in Te Ao Māori.

10. We identified a number of areas for the residence's development. The first two of these are particularly concerning and were brought to the residence manager's attention during our visit:

- Children and young people do not always feel safe at the residence s9(2)(a) OIA
s9(2)(a) OIA
- Some children and young people told us they, and others are being hurt during restraints
- Staff processes for admitting children and young people is sound, but the associated paperwork is inconsistent
- Grievance Advocates and VOYCE Whakarongo Mai are still unclear about their roles
- The staff at residence should consider children and young people's personal hygiene needs, continuous access to soap and how the toilets are managed with the timing flush system installed.
- Staff need more support to follow the child and young person's Operational Plans
- A strategic plan is yet to be developed by the residence to continue to improve outcomes for mokopuna Māori in sustainable means

Recommendations

For the National Office Oranga Tamariki

Rec 1: The DCE Care Services maintains priority attention on the development of specialised placements suitable for children with complex needs, so that vulnerable children with exceptionally high needs and challenging behaviours are not placed together in the same living arrangement and so extensions to care and protection residence placements can be minimised (Ref. p.p. 12).

Rec 2: The DCE Care Services and DCE Tamariki Advocate Voices of Children establishes a process to ensure the roles of grievance advocates are clear, distinct from the roles of the VOYCE Whakarongo Mai advocates, and meeting the requirements of the Residential Guidelines for children and young people's access to grievance advocates (Ref. p.p. 12).

For the Residence

Rec 3: Regarding the MAPA process at Te Oranga:

- a) The Residence Manager and Senior Leadership Team continue to support care staff to increase their skill in de-escalation techniques, helping children and young people learn to calm themselves. (Ref. p.p. 10).
- b) The Residence Manager and Senior Leadership Team prioritise minimising the likelihood of hurting children and young people in restraints. This is an urgent recommendation from the Office of the Children's Commissioner. (Ref. p.p. 10).

Rec 4: The Residence Manager and Senior Leadership Team continue to support care staff to increase their skill in de-escalation techniques, helping children and young people learn to calm themselves. (Ref. p.p. 10).

Rec 5: The Residence Manager and Senior Leadership Team ensure that children and young people's paper files are up to date with all relevant completed paperwork to enable accurate record keeping knowing that children and young people can also access these. (Ref. p.p. 12).

Rec 6: The Residence Manager and Senior Leadership Team, along with the Clinical Team continue to support care staff to ensure consistent implementation of children and young peoples' operational plans, to maximise regulatory opportunities and teachable moments for children and young people (Ref. p.p. 20).

For the National Office, Oranga Tamariki and the Residence

Rec 7: A strategic plan is created and implemented for Te Oranga containing a set of tangible, achievable and time-framed goals that meet the practice standard, Whakamana te Tamaiti and Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act, 1989. This should be done in consultation with staff, (including the staff of the Taiohi programme, children and young people and local iwi) to ensure relevance and sustainability (Ref. p.p. 22).

Findings for each OPCAT domain

Domain 1: Treatment



Good with a harmful element

11. This rating reflects the mostly good treatment that children and young people experience at Te Oranga. Relationships with children and young people are important to staff. Thoughtful planning goes into the transition process for children and young people when they are leaving the residence. A new Behaviour Management System (BMS) has been developed to better meet the needs of children and young people.
12. An ongoing and urgent area for development is building staff skill around de-escalation and the use of restraints to ensure children and young people are not unnecessarily restrained or, hurt during restraints. This Office raised concerns regarding restraints in our last OPCAT report dated 04 June 2019 and in our Voices of Young People Report dated 18 September 2018. For this reason, given our continued serious concerns about the use and implementation of restraints, the rating for the treatment domain has been assessed as good with a harmful element.

Strengths

- **Staff value building relationships with children and young people.** The importance placed on relationships is led and modelled by the Residence Manager and the Senior Leadership Team. We observed genuine, warm and engaging interactions between staff and children and young people. The children and young people we spoke with identified staff members they were able to get along with and trust.
- **Children and young people have both formal and informal opportunities to have a say in what happens at the residence.** Children and young people told us if they wanted to have a say in what is happening at the residence, they could easily talk to staff or the senior leadership team. Those we spoke with told us they attend a youth forum every Sunday and are able to share their opinions on how things run at the residence. The Residence Manager makes herself available to talk to children and young people when needed. We heard a young person proudly tell us of a time they made a suggestion and saw change happen as a result. This was further evidenced by the increased number of suggestions we could see coming through the Whaia Te Maramatanga process.

- **Children and young people are supported to learn about their identity.** They are provided with many opportunities to learn about who they are, whilst living at Te Oranga. We observed children and young people with various confidence levels being encouraged to talk about their whakapapa during the mihi whakatau. The Taiohi Programme, discussed in detail in Domain 7, allows for children and young people to learn and connect with their culture, whānau and whakapapa in a deeper way than previously seen at the residence.
- **Residence staff have been innovative in developing a new BMS system, in collaboration with the children and young people.** This has been informed by the Whare Tapa Whā¹ model. Similar to the previous BMS system, the new BMS is points based, however, it is no longer level based, and points cannot be lost. The new BMS system does not impact children and young people's participation in off-site activities or their access to the "Privilege Room". Children and young people earn points throughout the week and can "spend" them on different items at the end of the week or save up for higher point items. These items have been suggested by the children and young people. This BMS model was well liked by the children and young people and though new in the residence, is reported to be having a positive influence. Hearing about the new BMS system was a stand out for us, and we look forward to hearing more about its impact at our next visit.

What young people told us:

"I like it better than the old one... how many points you get? you get to spend it on like prizes, so I think that's really good and we've got the same bedtime, so I think that's good, cos that's fair."

"They've got like different point boxes and you can shop for what you want, and they've got like hair curlers, they've got face masks, it's really cool."

- **Staff are thoughtful in their planning and implementation of transition out of residence.** Transitions for children and young people from Te Oranga back into the community are managed with the specific needs of individual children and young people in mind. The Residence Manager has advocated for the right supports, matching the needs of children and young people, to be put in place while they are transitioning. We heard from staff of an example when Te Oranga advocated for a longer transition time for young people, despite pressure from an external provider. We also heard about staff members travelling with children and young people to their placement and staying for a period of time, to support the young person. These practices mean that children and young people are receiving a well-planned and well supported transition process.

Transitions have also been a focus for Kingslea School. The teaching staff feel that the more they can be involved in a child or young person's transition to their next learning provider, the more successful the transition will be. This strong focus on transition within education, aligns well with the overall transition process for children and young people.

¹ This model was developed by Mason Durie.

Areas for development

- Children and young people are being hurt during restraints at Te Oranga.** At the time of our visit, the staff were using Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA) as their primary method for de-escalating and restraining children and young people. We understand that there has recently been a refresher MAPA training for staff, however we heard from children and young people that restraints are hurting them. We understand that these are not deliberate acts by staff. This issue has been identified in our last two reports and needs to be addressed urgently. Children and young people also told us that while they understand the various reasons for restraints, there have been instances when they were restrained but felt they did not need to be.

Residence management has been proactive in having security footage reviewed by an external third-party when they have concerns regarding a restraint. Our findings indicate, that if there was a better staff understanding of the complete MAPA process and more use of de-escalation techniques, children and young people would learn how to calm themselves more effectively and more effective de-escalation would take place. Children and young people also told us that sometimes they do not see a medical professional after they have been restrained. During follow up around this, we have heard that the nurse does see children and young people as soon as possible after they have been restrained.

Each of the children and young people we spoke with individually told us:

"It's like sometimes restraints can go a little too far and they can like you know, go full power on you."

"It could have been good to talk first and then move me if I didn't move afterwards..."

"I find it hard cos sometimes like when they restrain you it kind of brings up like flashbacks of when your parents were hitting you ... and it brings up bad memories and then it sets us off more because they've got their hands on us."

"Restraints I hate them."

"I don't like being restrained cos it hurts my arm."

"Um it hurts, like when they do it for something they do it wrong and sometimes they can actually hurt you when they're doing it and they're a bit too rough."

"I remember one time I wasn't moving and one of the staff came over and grabbed, they both grabbed my arm and they were like twisting it like that and I wasn't like unsafe or anything."

Domain 2: Protection system



Inadequate

13. This rating reflects that whilst there are some areas of good practice, improvement is needed in some vital areas of the protection systems. Generally, the admission process is sound and the Whaia te Maramatanga process is understood and used by children and young people. There has been a focus on teaching children about their rights. Areas for development are the safety of young people and staff in the group setting and the need for clarity around the roles of VOYCE Whakarongo Mai and the grievance advocates. The serious safety concerns in this domain have led to this overall domain rating of inadequate.

Strengths

- The residence implements Whaia te Māramatanga (WTM) in a way that works for children and young people.** Children and young people are able to talk through some complaints and suggestions with staff but are also able to use WTM. The trend at Te Oranga at the time of our visit was that WTM was being used more for making suggestions rather than complaints. Children and young people are able to use post boxes in the unit to submit their WTM forms. From our examination of documentation and interviews with children and young people, we ascertained that robust investigations were being carried out and children and young people were receiving clear responses. Within some of the responses to children and young people, some of the language was subjective. We encourage staff to keep their responses objective.

When asked about grievances a young person told us:
 "It's good cos they [staff] come to you one on one and they talk to you about it and if they don't say you're wrong or anything. They won't be like oh no you're wrong, this is actually what happened. They will actually listen to you and if I don't agree I can, you know, go through the process if I don't like it..."
- Most children and young people know and can articulate their rights.** This has been an area of improvement since our last visit. Children and young people have the opportunity to participate in a weekly programme to learn about their rights. The residence has introduced rights cards as a tool to teach them about their rights. Within paper files, we sighted the child friendly statement of rights and one young person was able to articulate their rights, in a WTM suggestion we reviewed. Among the children and young people we spoke with, there was variation in their understanding of their rights. We encourage staff to continue to teach children and young people about their rights.

Areas for development

- **Admission processes are sound and meet the children and young people's immediate needs, but the associated paperwork is inconsistent.** Where possible, children and young people see the nurse on the day they arrive at the residence and the doctor within seven days of arrival. We sighted comprehensive admission forms in the children and young people's paper files that we sampled. However some documentation was incomplete. Additionally, in paper files there were inconsistencies of Individual Care Plans (ICPs). Keeping records is pivotal to professional accountability and ensures an accurate representation, for children and young people, of what has happened for them.

- **Children and young people do not always feel safe at Te Oranga.** During our visit, we observed **s 9(2)(a) OIA** for whom Te Oranga is struggling to provide an appropriate and safe physical environment. **s 9(2)(a) OIA**

s 9(2)(a) OIA
s 9(2)(a) OIA We heard about this young person seeking solace by behaving in a way that would result in an admission to secure care.

Many of the children and young people who are placed in care and protection residences have experienced the trauma of abuse. Decreasing the risk of cumulative harm to these children and young people is paramount. **s 9(2)(a) OIA**

Children and young people told us:

s 9(2)(ba)(i) OIA

s 6(c) OIA

s 9(2)(a) OIA We will be meeting with the Residence Manager and the acting Manger Operational Support, Residential Services to discuss this young person's care situation and the safety issues related to their placement at Te Oranga. See appendix one for the outcome of this discussion. We recognise that the culture of Te Oranga allows children and young people to speak about the things that are worrying them.

- **Lack of clarity between grievance advocates and VOYCE Whakarongo Mai advocates about their respective roles in the residence.** While the grievance advocates feel valued by management of Te Oranga, they have not been visiting the residence. We heard various reasons for this including feeling unclear about their role and the lack of uptake for their service from children and young people. We encourage the residence management team, with the support of National Office, to provide clear guidance to grievance advocates about

their roles. There need to be consistent community members available for grievance support, to ensure alignment with the residential regulations. It is important that children and young people at Te Oranga have ready access to both grievance advocates and Voyce Whakarongomai advocates and that the role of each is clearly defined and understood.

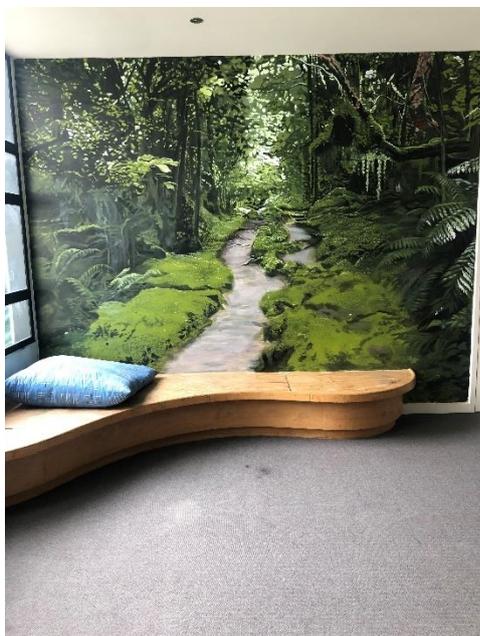


Photo: Art in secure



Photo: Selection of books at school



Photo: Outside of the residence

Domain 3: Material conditions



Good with inadequate elements

14. This rating reflects the mostly good environment at Te Oranga that supports children and young people to feel valued and during their time at the residence. The outdoor area is well maintained, with multiple areas for children and young people to play and there have been some positive changes in the kitchen. There are also now more spaces for children and young people to access, in addition to those that are part of the Behaviour Management System reward system. However, some children and young people were unable to access soap and we also heard about issues with the current toilet system.

Strengths

- **The outdoor environment is well maintained and child friendly.** There are multiple areas for children and young people to enjoy. Some highlights are a basketball court, spring free trampoline and a swimming pool for the summer months. An initiative in collaboration with a local hardware provider has enabled children and young people to build planter boxes and a bench (pictured to the right). Produce has been planted in these planter boxes as an on-going project for the children and young people to maintain. There is also a large grass area and playground.



- **Children and young people are supported to have a say in the menu.** This has been an area of improvement since our last monitoring visit. There are new staff working in the kitchen and they have provided children and young people with a questionnaire to find out the sort of food they want more or less of – capturing their likes and dislikes. We heard that this has been met with a positive response from the children and young people. The kitchen team have engaged with a dietitian who is going to assist them in finalising the menu for the summer months. We look forward to seeing the impacts of these developments on our next visit.

A young person told us:

“We did a list a couple of days ago of what we wanted like in our filled rolls and that for the summer plan in the kitchen. So, the things we’d like to see more of, which sauces we’d like, what fillings and all that.”

- **Children and young people have spaces they can go to be alone.** Within the unit, there is ‘The Zone’ (sensory space), a TV room and the “Privilege Room” (similar to a TV room and not behaviour dependent). Children and young people are able to access these spaces by asking staff. At Kingslea School there is another sensory room that children and young

people can access by asking teaching staff. Additionally, children and young people have toys and other personal belongings such as a weighted dog in their bedrooms.

Areas for development

- **The residence needs to ensure that the environment is adequately maintained.** There have been no major changes to the inside environment since our last visit, however there are plans for refurbishment. Management told us that some of the developments include painting, having the air conditioning unit replaced and the addition of sand filled couches and beanbags to the main unit. We heard from children and young people that they would like the residence to be more 'homely'. We look forward to hearing about these changes on our next visit.
- **The residence needs to ensure children and young people have their hygiene needs met.** Whilst on site we saw a wide variation in the availability of soap for children and young people in the bathrooms. Ensuring soap is in the bathrooms will be something we will follow up on during our future visits.
- **There is a mechanism in the toilets that children and young people find difficult because it affects the timing for flushing.** It stops the toilet being flushed for 10 minutes, if it has been flushed twice in one minute. National Office has confirmed this mechanism is installed in all the toilets across every residence, due to the risk of flooding areas with contaminated water. We heard from a young person that it is 'super embarrassing and annoying' that the toilets operate in this way. We encourage care staff to be mindful of the unintended impacts of this mechanism for children and young people's comfort and to adjust their practice when needed to ensure sufficient bathroom 'flush' time and the maintenance of dignity. We will review this issue with children and young people in other residences during our OPCAT visits, to see if there are any wider impacts from the use of this mechanism.

Domain 4: Activities and contact with others



Good

15. This rating reflects the good level of access children and young people have to therapeutic, cultural and fun activities and to their whānau. Most children and young people have regular phone access with their whānau, who are supported by the residence to visit.

Strengths

- Children and young people's participation in off-site group and individualised activities.** Residence and school staff work collaboratively to create an Adventure Based Learning (ABL) programme. The children and young people we spoke to told us this programme includes a wide range of outdoor activities such as canyoning, coasteering and caving and they enjoy participating. It is reported by staff that the ABL programme is planned through a trauma informed lens. This supports the overarching therapeutic model at the residence – the neuro-sequential model of therapeutics (NMT, Bruce Perry). This model was discussed in detail in our previous OPCAT report.

A young person told us:

"We have things called ABL ... Adventure Base Learning where we do things like rock climbing, sea kayaking, mountain biking, all that stuff and it's super fun..."

"I think the things to do is pretty good, we can occupy ourselves pretty easily."

Individual activities are thoughtfully planned and individualised to the needs of the children and young people. We heard about examples of children and young people being taken offsite to do te reo classes, aqua jogging and air training cadets.

- Children and young people enjoy education at Kingslea School.** The children and young people we spoke to told us they enjoy learning at school. They have access to individualised education plans that are focussed on specific and often short term learning goals. Teaching staff attend multi-agency team (MAT) meetings whenever possible.
- Children and young people have regular contact with their whānau.** Te Oranga provides opportunities for children and young people to connect with their whānau through both phone and physical visits. They are able to use cell phones to speak with their whānau anywhere within the residence. When whānau visit they can stay on-site at the flat, or the residence will arrange for alternative accommodation if required. These face-to-face visits are varied

Young people told us:

"I like this school because this school, like it is a normal school but like you know how mainstream schools are like, they don't really understand you. These teachers understand you and there's more teachers."

"They're nice, they're cool, I like the teachers."

depending on the child and/or young person and the relationship they have with their whānau and the locality where whānau live. This enables those who are based in the North Island to have regular face to face contact with their whānau. Children and young people are beginning to make connections to their wider whānau through some of the opportunities that have been provided for them to visit their marae and whenua. Continuing to provide these opportunities to strengthen their connections, to their hapu and iwi is something we look forward to hearing more about at our next visit.

- **Children and young people have opportunities to learn about Māori culture.** Children and young people told us that they have ample opportunities to participate in activities such as mau rakau, waiata and rāranga. Children and young people talked about how they were able to lead within these experiences and this was observed during our time at the residence.

Through the Taiohi programme provided at Te Oranga, children and young people are getting more opportunities to connect with their whānau and whakapapa in a way they have not before. The Taiohi programme is explained further in Domain 7.

Young people told us:

"Oh yeah it feels good, I feel good about my culture."

"Um it's good because like you get to learn about your iwi and marae, you get to learn about different people's cultures, so I find it really good."

"I want to learn about where I come from."



Photo: Spring free trampoline



Photo: Artwork outside the unit

Domain 5: Medical services and care



Good with excellent elements

16. This rating reflects the good access that children and young people at Te Oranga have to primary and specialist health services. A nurse and doctor are frequently on-site, and referrals are made to specialist services in the community when required. Children and young people are supported to attend medical appointments both on and off-site. The specialist Children in Care (CIC) Team visit children and young people on-site and complete a comprehensive assessment to ensure wider medical needs are attended to.

Strengths

- **Children and young people have good access to primary health care services.** Te Oranga has a nurse who is contracted to provide medical support to the residence three days a week. A doctor visits the residence once a week. The nurse values relationships and has worked hard on building relationships with children and young people who have a mistrust of healthcare. She acknowledges that relationships and rapport need to be built before the health interventions can begin. We heard that Te Oranga has health practitioners who are passionate about the health of children and young people, about relationship building and creating meaningful change.

We also heard about the intensive health planning that occurs at Te Oranga to ensure each child or young person has their health needs met during their time at the residence.

Children and young people told us:

"I think my health is pretty good... if I ask or need something I'll get sent to the nurse for stuff... We do check-ups regularly."

"I'd say I'm getting more medical attention than I thought because usually, I've actually got a good doctor cos the last doctor I had didn't really know what to do with my meds and that."

- **Children and young people can easily access specialist services.** All children and young people receive dental, vision and hearing checks while placed at the residence. The nurse completes the initial audiology and optometry tests and if required further referrals are made to community providers. The nurse has built relationships with local services and as a result these services are highly responsive to appointment requests meaning children and young people can access these services in a timely manner.
- **Children in Care (CIC) Team provides comprehensive mental health support for children and young people at the residence.** As outlined in our previous report, the District Health Board (DHB) in Christchurch has developed a specialist mental health team for children in care called the Children in Care (CIC) team. We heard how this team has improved access to specialist mental health services for children under the age of 13 years.

For those 13 years and over, the nurse refers them to Child, Adolescent and Family Services, North (CAF). At the time of our visit, [REDACTED] of the ten children and young people at Te Oranga were supported by the CIC team. As mentioned previously, the CIC Team works with the Senior Leadership Team to deliver training that is relevant to staff at Te Oranga. It is exciting to see this level of access to the specialist mental health team being sustained consistently over time.

- **Care staff are supported to ensure they follow health plans.** Health staff are providing an increasing amount of training to care teams in order to support them to manage the health and medication needs of children and young people. This training occurs in small groups or with the individual staff member working alongside the nurse, depending on need. We heard that one care staff member per shift is responsible for administering medication to avoid doubling up or missing doses. We observed staff dispensing medication at lunch time, The staff member clearly explained to a young person what their medication was and what it was for.

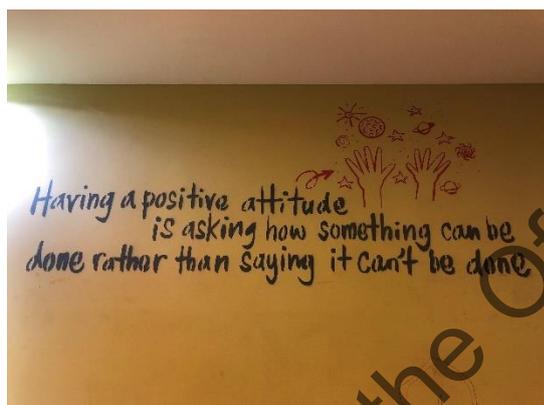


Photo: Quote in a bedroom



Photo: Artwork in the courtyard

Domain 6: Personnel



Good with inadequate elements

17. The Te Oranga staff team are mostly able to respond effectively to the needs of children and young people. They are trained, supervised and have the required skills to meet the individual needs of the children and young people they care for. One significant area for development is the need to implement the residence's comprehensive Operational Plans in a way that is consistent and meaningful for children and young people.

Strengths

- **Staffing levels are sufficient.** Staff levels allow children and young people to attend visits with whānau and take part in individualised off-site activities. During our visit we observed staffing levels that were sufficient to ensure staff members were able to take a young person offsite to get medically checked. We heard that Te Oranga has increased its casual staff pool from 15 to 20, to allow for cover of annual and sick leave. It is positive to see this focus on ensuring staffing levels are maintained consistently. Collaboration between education and residence staff allows for off-site activities to be well managed. Staff turnover at Te Oranga is low. We understand that only five staff members have left, in five years.
- **Staff receive training and coaching that increases their ability to best meet the needs of the children and young people.** Recent training for staff has focussed on the care standards. Staff have also had MAPA refresher training and first aid training. There has been training delivered by the Clinical Team Leader, alongside the CIC Team, focused on trauma informed care. Care staff value learning from one another and observing Case Leaders and Clinical Team Leaders working with children and young people. We understand Operational Team Leaders will shortly be moving down to the main unit to provide more on-the-floor support, observations and coaching for care staff. During our next visit, we look forward to seeing the positive impacts of this move for the children and young people.
- **Staff have regular access to supervision.** Care staff at Te Oranga are offered individual, group and cultural supervision on a three-weekly basis. Case Leaders have fortnightly supervision and other managers are able to have both internal and external supervision if needed. Cultural supervision has recently been introduced and is available for all staff. It has been well received. Early reports from staff suggest the practical cultural support offered is helping them with their everyday work. Training on supervision for supervisees is scheduled for later in October, to ensure staff members are getting the most out of supervision.

- **The multiple staff teams at Te Oranga work well together.** All staff we spoke to told us about the good relationships between staff teams. Operational teams value the practical on-the-floor support from Case Leaders observing and demonstrating what a therapeutic approach looks like in practice. Health and Education staff spoke about having strong, positive working relationships with the Oranga Tamariki staff and vice versa. Staff members talked about the strong communication between all the teams and told us that everyone is keen to work together to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people. We observed that Te Oranga management were quick to follow up on any staffing issues they were aware of.
- **Care teams have consistent expectations for children and young people.** The children and young people we interviewed at Te Oranga mostly spoke positively about staff. We heard that there is consistency of practice and work approaches across the care teams. This means expectations are clear and consistent for children and young people, regardless of who is working with them.

Areas for development

- **Staff need more support to follow Operational Plans.** During our time at Te Oranga we observed and heard of instances when care staff behaviour escalated children and young people rather than supporting them to regulate themselves. We reviewed comprehensive Operational Plans developed by the Case Leaders. However, it is unclear how consistently these plans are being followed in practice. Te Oranga has already taken steps to increase the implementation of these plans, by allowing casual staff to take time on their float days to read them. They are also moving Operational Team Leaders into the unit for additional support. However, further and sustained attention will be required from residence management, to ensure that children and young people are supported to live in a space that consistently meets (and helps them meet) their individual behavioural needs.



Photo: Artwork in the unit

Domain 7: Improving outcomes for mokopuna Māori



Good with inadequate elements

18. This rating reflects the good start Te Oranga has made to improving outcomes for mokopuna Māori. There has been support from management to trial Taiohi, a new pilot programme that has already had positive impacts for children and young people. Mokopuna Māori also have the opportunity to participate in cultural activities, such as learning te reo Māori and learning about and connect with their whakapapa. The area for development in this domain is the need to establish an intentional and strategic vision that can support the residence in improving outcomes for mokopuna Māori over time.

Strengths

- Te Oranga has piloted a new programme - Taiohi, to increase children and young people's connectedness with their Māori culture.** Residence leadership has supported two staff members to pilot a programme called Taiohi, as a way to improve outcomes for mokopuna Māori. The Taiohi programme has just finished its first round with two recent graduates (young people). We heard that young people have experienced success through the programme in ways they have not experienced before. This includes finding a sense of connection through the activities, finding out about and meeting new people within their whakapapa and visiting places of significance for themselves and their whanau. We heard that community organisations are wanting to show support by resourcing the programme. Taiohi provides opportunities for children and young people to take part in off-site activities including visiting their marae and going into the bush to learn about Tāne Mahuta.

We are really looking forward to seeing how the Taiohi programme progresses and whether it becomes a normal embedded part of daily life in the residence.

- Mokopuna Māori have many opportunities to participate in and learn about Te Ao Māori** Children and young people who have not participated in the Taiohi programme, told us that they have ample opportunities to participate in activities. These activities include weekly kapahaka and daily waiata and karakia. We observed children and young people participating in Mihi Whakatau where they had the opportunity to lead waiata, participate in the formalities of the whakatau, and share their pepeha through the whanaungatanga process. This was heartening to see and gave us a

Young people told us:

"They've also been putting more Māori vibes into the unit, like putting up Māori art and Māori phrases up in the building so we could like learn more things, use our language more."

"We do some cultural stuff where we do flax weaving, we learn how to do poi..."

warm welcome into the residence. We observed staff leading by example and speaking te reo Māori. This was great to see and hear.

- Partnerships with Māori are being strengthened.** We heard from the residence that the connections with local mana whenua continue to be sustained. There is a formal arrangement between the residence and s9(2)(i) OIA [REDACTED]. There are also informal staff connections and collaborative initiatives between staff and local iwi. This has been an area of improvement since our last visit.
- Staff at the residence are building cultural capability.** The residence has recently engaged with a cultural supervisor. The cultural supervision has been received positively by staff and much appreciated. We encourage management to continue to support staff to prioritise and attend cultural supervision. We look forward to hearing about the impact of this supervision on staff knowledge and practice development at our next visit.

Young people told us:

"It's not at all as I thought it was going to be, I thought it was going to be horrible. It's actually quite nice, I think I'm learning more about myself being here than where I was last at."

"I know I'm s9(2)(a) OIA [REDACTED] but s9(2)(a) OIA [REDACTED], but I want to learn about the rest of them, so I know what's all in me."

Area for Development

- An overarching strategic vision and plan are needed so the residence to continue to improve outcomes for mokopuna Māori in a sustainable way.** During our visit we discussed that the Taiohi programme could be used to guide the residence's strategic vision in improving outcomes for mokopuna Māori. This should align with the direction of National Office and Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act, 1989. This has been identified as an area for improvement across our recent Te Oranga monitoring reports. Residence management believe they are ready to take this next strategic step. We agree. We look forward to seeing this strategic vision and plan in place, at our next visit.

Appendix One: Follow up from visit

19. As discussed on page 12 of the report, the OCC have followed up with Oranga Tamariki regarding the care situation of a young person who was at Te Oranga during our visit.

There was a meeting held on Thursday 21 November 2019 and OCC was satisfied with the outcome.

No further details are being provided in this report to protect the anonymity of the young person.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Appendix Two: Why we visit (legislative background)

20. The Children's Commissioner has a statutory responsibility to monitor and assess the services provided under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. Specifically, section 13(1) (b) of the Children and young people's Commissioner Act 2003, states that the Commissioner must monitor and assess the policies and practices of Child, Youth and Family and encourage the development of policies and services that are designed to promote the welfare of children and young people and children and young people.
21. In addition, the Office of the Children's Commissioner is designated as a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Crimes of Torture Act (1989). This Act contains New Zealand's practical mechanisms for ensuring compliance with the United Nations Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT), which was itself ratified by New Zealand in 2007. Our role is to visit youth justice and care and protection residences to ensure compliance with OPCAT.

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Appendix Three: Interpretation of ratings

22. The Table below provides a quick reference to the meanings of ratings given in the report.

The overall question our OPCAT monitoring seeks to answer is: *To what extent does Oranga Tamariki have the enablers in place that support C&YP to have the desired experience (for each element that we assess under each domain)?* Enablers we look at include: systems, structures, policies, procedures, opportunities and practice.

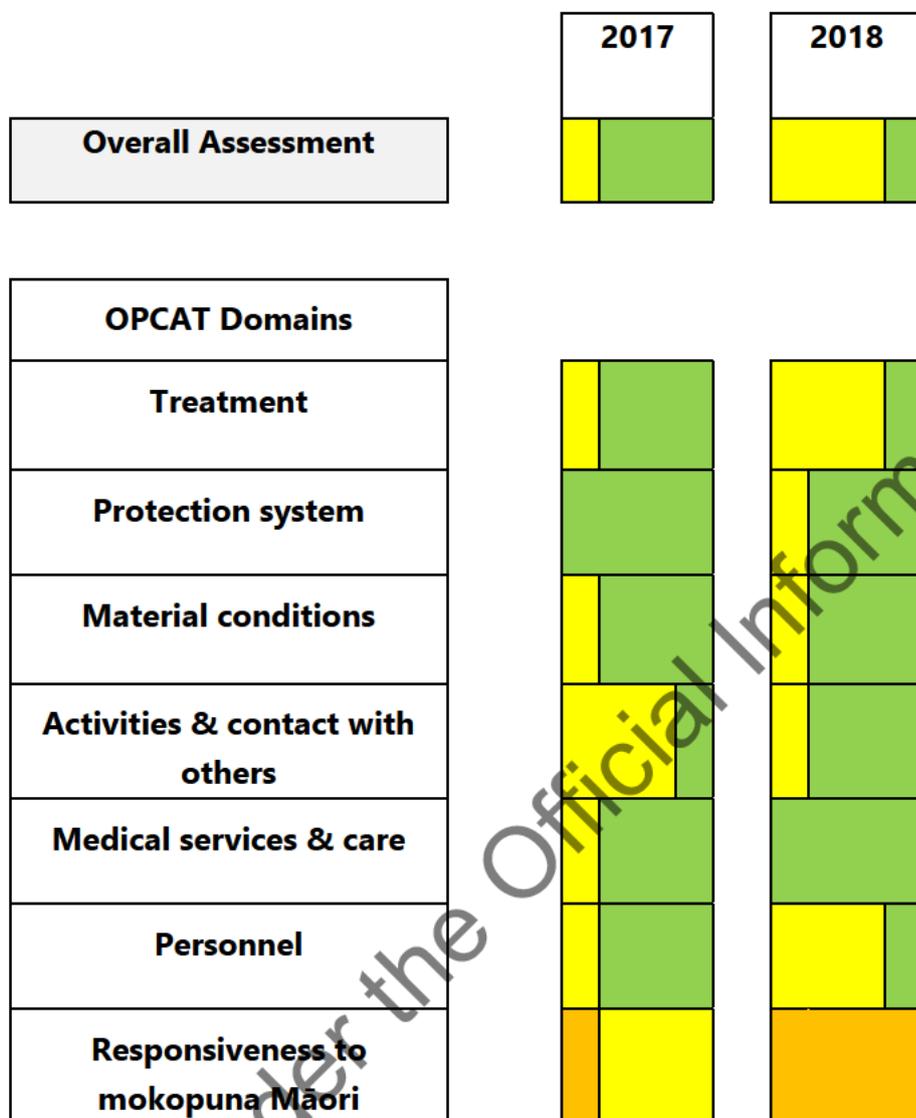
Each OPCAT domain is made up of multiple elements. For each element, the rubric provides a description of the enablers of good practice and the desired experience for C&YP.

Rating	Assessment	What it means
	Excellent	The organisation does an excellent job of enabling C&YP to have the desired experience.
	Good	The organisation does a good job of enabling C&YP to have the desired experience.
	Inadequate / Needs improvement	The organisation does an inadequate job of enabling C&YP to have the desired experience.
	Harmful	The enablers are not in place, the experience is harmful for C&YP. Note that 'harmful' typically implies an element of intentional, negligent, rejecting, or undermining practice or environment. However, if the consequences of a practice or environment are harmful enough, then they may receive a rating of harmful, even if the practice or environment is not intentionally harmful.

Note: Even though staff experiences and practices are taken into account, it is the C&YP's experiences that anchor the ratings, not the experience of staff.

Appendix Four: Previous OPCAT ratings

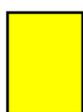
23. Note these ratings used our previous 5 point rating scale.



Detrimental



Minimally Effective/weak



Developing



Well placed



Transformational

Appendix Five: Our monitoring approach

Our reports are based on information gathered before, during and after visits to the residences. This includes accuracy meetings based on our draft reports.

In the context of our OPCAT visits, we use Mana Mokopuna principles and resources to engage children and young people in conversation about their experiences in the residence. For more information on our Mana Mokopuna approach, see our website.

24. Our visit to Te Oranga Care and Protection Residence included interviews with:

- Children and young people (6)
- Residence Staff (16)
 - Residence Manager
 - Team Leaders Operations (TLO)
 - Team Leader of Clinical Practice (TLCP)
 - Care team
 - Clinical team
 - Programme Co-ordinator
 - Grievance Co-ordinator
- Health team
- Education team
- Grievance Panel
- VOYCE Whakarongo Mai

25. The following sources of information also informed our analysis:

- Visual inspection of the residence
- Observations of interactions in the residence between children, young people and staff
- Informal discussions with staff
- Informal discussions with children and young people on topics of interest.
- Last Oranga Tamariki internal audit report
- Grievance quarterly reports
- Grievance files

- Training register
- Children and young people's files at the residence (including Individual Care Plans)
- Secure care register, secure care log book
- Daily Logs

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